Selection of irrigation projects

563. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state the criteria being adopted by the Union Government for selecting the important irrigation projects for earmarking plan outlays?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SUKH RAM): In order to ensure meeting with the planned requirements of irrigation sector, outlays are being earmarked for irrigation projects on the basis of following considerations:

(i) early completion of long delayed ongoing schemes;

(ii) projects of inter-State and international aspects;

(iii) externally aided projects; and

(iv) projects of strategic importance such as those benefitting drought and backward area, supply of drinking water etc.

Pakistan visa office at Hyderabad

564. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to start Pakistan visa office at Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh by Pakistan Embassy; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposal and the probable date by which the office will start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) Government have agreed as a special case to the opening of a temporary Pakistan Visa office in Hyderabad for two days each month. The temporary visa office has so far functioned on three occasions, i.e., from the 18th to 19th March, 1987, 20th to 21st July; 1987 and 21st to 22nd September 1987.

Stoppage of Pak nuclear programme by US

565. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whethir Government's attention has been drawn to a news report which appeared in the "Indian Express' dated September 15, 1987, under the Caption "US cannot stop Pak N-Programme';

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction in this regard; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to safeguard India's security?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have been consistently urging the US Administration to use its influence with Pakistan, and available means under US laws, to deter Pakistan from pursuing the nuclear weapons option. Government are also aware that despite revelations about the non-peaceful and clandestine aspects of Pakistan's nuclear programme, it has benefited from a waiver from US Non-Proliferation laws for many years.

(c) India's defence preparedness is continuously reviewed to meet any eventuality or threat to the counry's security.

Negotiations with UK to amend immigration rules

566. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state·

(a) whether any negotiations have been made between Indian and U.K. to amend the immigration rules; and

(b) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDWARDO FELEIRO): (a) No, Sir. However, the difficulties experienced by Indian spouses and dependents in obtaining visas expeditiously have been repeatedly taken up with the U.K. authorities.

(b) The U.K. authorities took note of our points, without proffering any solutions or commitments.

US to give 200 more missiles to Pakistan

567. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a news report published in the 'Newstime', dated September 14, 1987, under the heading "US to give Pak 200 more Missiles';

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government of India have conveyed their concern to the Governments of US and Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the response of the US and Pakistan Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Under supplies contracted in 1985-86, Pakistan is receiving some missiles including Sidewinder air to air missiles

(b) Government is taking all necessary steps to ensure India's security.

(c) Government have conveyed to the US Administration that supply of sophisticated arms to Pakistan compels India to divert scarce resources from development to defence and leads to an un-necessary arms race in the subcontinent.

(d) The US Government has stated that security assistance to Pakistan is a response to a perceived threat from Afghanistan and Pakistan's defence modernisation needs and is not directed against India. Government do not share this assessment.

Anti-India blitz in Pak Media

568. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to a news report published in the Hindustan Times, dated 22nd September, 1987 under the caption "Anti-India Blitz in Pak media:

(b) if so, whether the Government have conveyed their unhappiness to the Government of Pakistan in this regard; and

(c) the response of the Pak Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c)) The Government of India have taken due note of the anti-India propaganda carried on by the media in Pakistan. The unhappiness of the Government of India in this regard has been conveyed to the Government of Pakistan on several occasions from time to time. The Government of India regret that in spite of these efforts the trend of coverage of news pertaining to India in the Pakistan media continues to be negative and slanted.